

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 (cancelled).

17 (currently amended): A method for manufacturing an integrated circuit comprising a nonvolatile memory, the method comprising:

forming a first layer comprising a silicon surface, the first layer being to provide one or more floating gates for the nonvolatile memory;

nitriding the silicon surface of the first layer by remote plasma nitridation ~~and/or decoupled plasma nitridation~~ to incorporate nitrogen atoms into said surface;

forming a first dielectric at the nitrided surface, wherein forming the first dielectric comprises forming silicon oxide at the nitrided surface;

forming a conductive layer separated from the nitrided surface by the first dielectric, the conductive layer providing one or more control gates for the nonvolatile memory.

Claim 18 (cancelled).

19 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein the nitriding operation comprises decoupled plasma nitridation.

20 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein forming the silicon oxide at the nitrided surface comprises forming the silicon oxide by thermal oxidation.

21 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein the silicon surface of the first layer is a polysilicon surface.

22 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein forming the first dielectric comprises:

forming the first dielectric to have a silicon oxide surface; and

nitriding the silicon oxide surface of the first dielectric to incorporate nitrogen atoms into the silicon oxide surface.

23 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises ion implantation of a material comprising nitrogen into the silicon oxide surface.

24 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises generating a plasma comprising ions comprising nitrogen, and exposing the silicon oxide surface to the plasma.

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amp.  
25 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises remote plasma nitridation.

26 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface comprises decoupled plasma nitridation.

27 (previously added): The method of Claim 22 wherein the nitriding of the silicon oxide surface results in forming at the silicon oxide surface a nitrided silicon oxide layer less than 3 nm thick.

28 (previously added): The method of Claim 17 wherein the nitriding of the silicon surface results in forming at the silicon surface a layer of nitrided silicon less than 3 nm thick.

29 (cancelled).